

The weeping willows o'er the sacred dust
Of dear departed ones; yet in that land,
Where'er our footsteps fall upon the shore,
They that were sleeping rise from out the dust
Of death's long, silent years, and round us stand
As erst they did before the prison tomb
Received their clay within its voiceless halls.
The heavens that bend above that land are hung
With clouds of various hues. Some dark and chill,
Surcharged with sorrow, cast their sombre shade
Upon the sunny, joyous land below.
Others are floating through the dreamy air,
White as the falling snow, their margins tinged
With gold and crimson hues; their shadows fall
Upon the flowery meads and sunny slopes,
Soft as the shadow of an angel's wing.
When the rough battle of the day is done,
A d evening's peace falls gently on the heart,
I bound away, across the noisy years,
Unto the utmost verge of memory's land,
Where earth and sky in dreamy distance meet,
And memory dim with dark oblivion joins;
Where woke the first remembered sounds that fell
Upon the ear in childhood's early morn;
And, wandering thence along the rolling years,
I see the shadow of my former self
Gliding from childhood up to man's estate;
The path of youth winds down through many a vale,
And on the brink of many a dread abyss,
From out whose darkness comes no ray of light,
Save that a phantom dances o'er the gulf
And beckons toward the verge. Again the path
Leads o'er the summit where the sunbeams fall;
And thus in light and shade, sunshine and gloom,
Sorrow and joy this life-path leads along.

ALL QUIET ALONG THE POTOMAC.

BY ETHELINDA ELLIOTT BEERS.

Born in New York, 1827; died in New Jersey, 1879.

The following poem first appeared in "Harper's Weekly" in 1861, and being published anonymously its authorship was, says Mr. Stedman, "falsely claimed by several persons."

ALL quiet along the Potomac, they say,
"Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat, to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'Tis nothing; a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost—only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle."

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;

Their tents in the rays of the clear autumn moon,
Or the light of the watchfires, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh, as the gentle night-wind
Through the forest leaves softly is creeping;
While stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard—for the army is sleeping.

There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And he thinks of the two in the low trundle-bed,
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep,
For their mother—may Heaven defend her!

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night when the love yet unspoken
Leaped up to his lips—when low, murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken;
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashes off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place,
As if to keep down the heart-swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree—
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shades of the forest so dreary.
Hark! was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle: "Ha! Mary, good-by!"
And the life-blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac to-night—
No sound save the rush of the river;
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead—
The picket's off duty forever.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

BY EPES SARGENT.

Born 1813; died 1880. The following beautiful and popular song, sung all over the world, like "Home, Sweet Home," is by an American author. It is one of those bits of lyric verse which will perpetuate the name of its writer longer, perhaps, than any of the many books which he gave to the world.

ALIFE on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep;
Where the scattered waters rave,
And the winds their revels keep!
Like an angel caged I pine,
On this dull, unchanging shore:
O, give me the flashing brine,
The spray and the tempest's roar!